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ABSTRACT

A study examined the socioeconomic status of Irish youth, the vocational counseling services available to them, and the specific vocational counseling needs of disadvantaged youth in the rural Irish communities of North Mayo and North-West Connemara. It was discovered that the average rural disadvantaged Irish youth is an unemployed single male dropout who lives with his parents, receives social welfare, and has received little/no vocational counseling in or outside of school. Appropriate vocational training with a high quality guidance component was deemed one way of improving rural Irish youths' chances of finding employment and thereby improving their social/economic situation. Other strategies recommended to improve the situation of rural disadvantaged Irish youth were as follows: develop interventions to keep them in school longer, use the local media to provide informal guidance to their parents, encourage a policy of positive discrimination in employers' recruitment practices, and use European Community (EC) programs to establish a bridgehead for Irish youth into training and employment opportunities in other EC member states. (Contains 33 references.) (MN)

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# Determining the need for vocational counselling among different target groups of young people under 28 years of age in Ireland

## Case studies: rural disadvantaged youth

CE 020 114

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**Determining the need for vocational counselling among different target groups of young people under 28 years of age in Ireland**

**Case studies:**
**rural disadvantaged youth**

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## Preface by CEDEFOP

In developing the careers of young people and integrating them into working life, career guidance is becoming increasingly important. Persistent, structurally-caused unemployment, higher qualification requirements, complex training paths with eased transition between initial and continuing training, the increasing deregulation of the labour market and the emergence of new values and life styles among young people present career guidance services, as the instrument for regulating supply and demand on training, education and labour markets, with fundamental and complex tasks. At the same time, European integration poses new challenges to the career guidance services in the Member States. The PETRA 3 programme has taken an initial step in this direction through setting up European-oriented national resource centres, through organizing transitional continuing training courses for occupational guidance counsellors and publishing the "European Manual for Occupational Guidance Counsellors".

The comparative studies[1] carried out by CEDEFOP and Task Force: Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth to support and monitor work in this field have increased transparency in national occupational guidance systems and qualification structures.

The activities and research work carried out aimed primarily to make proposals or provide support for improving occupational guidance activities, to focus such work in a European context on the basis of existing national structures. Counselling requirements were deduced from existing or forecasted demand (enquiries at guidance services) or from general data derived from labour market and occupational research.

To date the needs of various target groups of young people based on their economic and social and cultural situation, their values, their career plans, their conception of the efficiency of occupational guidance offers etc. have not been taken into account.

This issue was examined in the project "Determination of (occupational) guidance needs for various groups of young people under 28 years of age in the European Union", carried out between March 1993 and May 1994, the results of which are now available (12 national reports, in the original language and English, partly in French, the synthesis report in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish).

A total of 21 target groups were examined; nine of the reports examined two of the groups and three reports examined one target group. Particular attention was devoted to young people at a particular disadvantage who had no or inadequate access to occupational guidance services. The target groups selected are listed in the appendices of the 12 national reports and the synthesis report as the aims and findings of the project - as stressed in the synthesis report - can only be viewed in the context of the interrelationships between the various elements. The national reports have been published in separate editions as certain readers are interested

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[1] Occupational profiles and training in occupational guidance counselling, CEDEFOP, 1992, 12 national studies and synthesis report.
Educational and vocational guidance services for youth and young adults in the EC, European Commission, 1993, 12 national reports and synthesis report. As a supplement:
EUROCOUNSEL, Counselling and long-term unemployment, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin, 1992-1993, 6 national studies and synthesis report.

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in specific target groups whose problems in finding training and work have supra-national features which are characteristic of other target groups which we selected.

This project was commissioned by Task Force: Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth as part of the PETRA 3 programme aiming to produce indicators for differentiated and demand-oriented occupational guidance practices and to create more offensive planning strategies to reach as far as possible those target groups which were excluded from guidance counselling for the reasons contained in the reports. New proposals are being formulated at present to prepare the gradual transition to the "LEONARDO DA VINCI Programme".

Enrique Retuerto de la Torre
Deputy Director

Gesa Chomé
Project Coordinator

# Introduction

## SUMMARY

This study was undertaken in the context of the creation of the Single European Market which has given citizens of the European Community access to initial and continuing education, training and employment opportunities in all EC Member States. Vocational counselling in all of its various facets - information, guidance, advice and counselling - has a key role in facilitating the mobility of the labour force. The concept and prospect of this mobility have different meanings for sub-groups within the population. Wide variation in access to vocational counselling, in the process and quality of vocational counselling, and consequently in the outcomes of vocational counselling exists. This CEDEFOP project attempts to map out characteristics of youth transitions in Ireland and the vocational counselling services available to young people. It focuses in particular on the experiences of rural disadvantaged youth.

The method employed in the project was the identification and examination of studies of youth transitions undertaken at national level and of more focused studies of rural disadvantaged youth written up since 1987. Consultations with relevant agencies and professionals were undertaken. While national studies of youth transitions have recently been carried out, there is a dearth of specific studies of the vocational counselling needs of young people both at national and local levels. Studies of rural youth in the West of Ireland have paid marginal attention to those needs. Emigration is a particular feature of youth transition in Ireland and due attention is paid to that experience in this study. The experience of emigration to the United Kingdom has been charted to some extent. Descriptions of formal vocational counselling services in Ireland are readily available. The usage of these services however is largely untabulated and the evaluation of the services in terms of meeting customers' needs appears non-existent. In short the findings and conclusions that follow have to be viewed in the context of a neglected area of primary research.

For the majority of young Irish people, the transition from school to work and adult life is characterised by high levels of educational attainment in school, the pursuit of further education and training post school or employment, lack of employment opportunities locally and in Ireland leading to (i) high youth unemployment, (ii) under employment, and (iii) emigration for employment. While emigration has traditionally been to English speaking countries, recent trends show a marked increase

to EC countries other than the UK. Migration is perceived as part of career development by some young people and as an economic necessity by many young people. The better qualified are more likely to migrate. Foreign language competency deficiency limits somewhat the range of migration destinations. At national level, vocational counselling with a European dimension already exists through guidance provision in second level schools and higher education institutions, through the employment and training agencies, and through a variety of community and voluntary groups concerned with emigration. Young people with higher levels of educational attainment are most likely to benefit from this provision.There has been, as yet, very little systematic attempt to provide appropriate vocational information materials though some excellent individual items have been developed by voluntary groups.

When one examines studies of target groups of young people such as the rural disadvantaged, one discovers that these are unlikely to have been recipients of any form of vocational counselling. Most are unqualified, early school-leavers who drift into unemployment and tend to remain there. Local temporary and seasonal work of a semi/unskilled nature are beyond their reach due to the practice of employing persons with a high level of educational attainment. They tend to stay around the local area for a number of years and eventually emigrate for a short period of time.

Several suggestions are put forward to help improve the chances of the rural disadvantaged. These include interventions to keep them in school longer, to provide informal guidance to their parents by use of local media, to provide appropriate vocational training with a quality guidance component, to encourage a policy of positive discrimination in employer's recruitment practice, and to use EC programmes e.g. PETRA, to establish a bridgehead for them into training and employment opportunities in other Member States.

## Chapter 1

# THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER 28 YEARS OF AGE

## 1. Introduction

This chapter contains a basic statistical description of the social and economic status of young people under 28 years of age. It examines data relating to equality and participation in education, emigration attitude and behaviour, experiences of education and employment, occupational employment forecasts, and the values and interests of young Irish people.

### 1.1 Demographic Statistics

The structure and distribution of youth population, according to the 1991 Census of Population, are presented in this section taking into account the variables of Age, Gender, Location, and Marital Status.

Table 1(a) Population Classified by Age Group and Gender, 1991

| Age Group | Total | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0-4 years | 273 730 (7.8) | 140 558 | 133 172 |
| 5-9 " | 318 500 (9.0) | 163 344 | 155 156 |
| 9-14 | 348 322 (9.9) | 178 924 | 169 398 |
| 15-19 | 335 026 (9.5) | 171 408 | 163 618 |
| 20-24 " | 266 572 (7.5) | 136 479 | 130 093 |
| 25-29 " | 246 320 (6.9) | 120 659 | 125 661 |

[Percentage of the total population given in brackets]

Source: Central Statistics Office (CSO) 1993

The 0-14 cohort represents 27% of the total population. When added to the 15-29 cohort, youth under the age of 29 years represents 51% of the total population of Ireland. Compared with other Member States, Ireland had the highest proportion of young people in its population in 1991(Eurostat 1993). The lower total figures in 20-29 age group are partly explained by emigration. The lower figure for males in the 25-29 age group suggests that emigration may feature more for males than for females.

Table 1 (b) Population Classified by Age, and Aggregate Town and Rural Area,1991

| Age Group | Town | Rural |
|---|---|---|
| 0-4 years | 154 853 (4.4) | 118 877 (3.4) |
| 5-9 " | 171 513 (4.9) | 146 987 (4.2) |
| 9-14 | 188 394 (5.3) | 159 928 (4.5) |
| 15-19 | 196 822 (5.6) | 138 204 (4.0) |
| 20-24 " | 178 125 (5.1) | 88 447 (2.5) |
| 25-29 " | 159 575 (4.5) | 86 745 (2.5) |

[Percentage of the total population given in brackets]

Source: CSO,1993

Approximately 59% of persons under the age of 29 years live in a town area (i.e. towns with a population of 1,500 or more). In rural areas (i.e. towns with a population of less than 1,500 and Rural Areas) the corresponding percentage is 41%. The greatest town/rural differences occur in the post-compulsory schooling age categories (15-29 years) reflecting internal and external migration for employment, higher education and training. These categories are now examined taking the additional variable of gender into account.

Table 1 (c) Population Classified by Age, Gender, and Location (Town/Rural), 1991

| Age Group | Male (Town) | Female (Town) | Male (Rural) | Female (Rural) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15-19 years | 98 715(11.6) | 98 107(11.6) | 72 693(8.5) | 65 511(8.0) |
| 20-24 " | 87 127(10.0) | 90 998(10.7) | 49 352(5.8) | 39 095(4.6) |
| 25-29 " | 76 087(9.0) | 83 488(10.0) | 44 572(5.3) | 42 173(5.0) |

[Percentages of the total 15-29 age cohort are given in brackets]

Source: CSO,1993

Male/ female comparisons for each age category based on a town/rural divide do not show marked differences except for Rural, age 20-24, and Town, age 25-29. The rural difference may be partly explained by inheritance/family business factors, and both town and rural differences by emigration. When separate comparisons of males and females are made on the location dimension, the largest differences occur in the 20-29 age group, peaking in the age 20-24 category with proportionately more of both sexes living in Town areas. This may be due to internal migration, with the Town area figures including rural persons who moved there for employment, training and higher education.

Marital status statistics describe an important feature of youth to adulthood transition. A classification by age, gender and status is now presented.

Table 1 (d) Population Classified by Age, Gender, and Marital Status, 1991

| | Male | | Female | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age Group | Single | Ever-married | Single | Ever-married |
| 15-19 years | 171 161 | 247 | 162 908 | 710 |
| 20-24 " | 128 195 | 8 284 | 112 156 | 17 937 |
| 25-29 " | 70 583 | 50 076 | 54 472 | 71 189 |

Source: CSO,1993

A significant difference emerges in marriage patterns. Females tend to marry at a younger age. Married females outnumber married males by a 2:1 ratio for the 15-24 age cohort. An unknown element here is the extent to which this pattern affects take up of places in employment, training, and education by females. A steady downward trend in the number of marriages registered has been noted since 1980. Ireland recorded the lowest gross marriage rate in the EC in 1991(Eurostat 1993).

Population change between 1986 and 1991 is next considered.

Table 1(e) Population 1986 and 1991 Classified by Gender and Age

| | Male | | Female | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age Group | 1986 | 1991 | 1986 | 1991 |
| 15-19 years | 168 887 | 171 408 | 161 213 | 163 618 |
| 20-24 " | 144 112 | 136 479 | 142 312 | 130 093 |
| 25-29 | 129 086 | 120 659 | 129 353 | 125 661 |

Source: CSO,1993

The decline in population for the 20-29 age group is most likely explained by outward migration. The estimated net migration (inward less outward) for the entire population for the intercensal period 1986-91, according the Central Statistics Office, was 134 000 persons. Ireland had the highest fertility rate per woman and highest reproduction rate in the EC in 1991(Eurostat 1993). While the number of births per 1 000 females has shown a downward trend since 1986 there has been a substantial rise in the proportion of births to single women. Table 1(f), provided by the Dept. of Social Welfare, gives estimates based on the number of recipients of the Lone Parent's Allowance.

Table 1 (f) Number of Recipients of Lone Parent's Allowance by Status of Parent, Age and Gender,1992 (Estimated)

| Age Group (Years) | Unmarried Parents | | Seperated Spouse | | Widowed | | Prisoner's Spouse | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| Under 25 | 6 | 12 141 | 1 | 229 | 3 | 14 | 0 | 19 | 10 | 12 403 |
| 25-29 | 10 | 6 010 | 26 | 874 | 2 | 39 | 0 | 36 | 38 | 6 959 |
| Total (All ages) | 57 | 24 020 | 538 | 5 900 | 689 | 1 588 | 0 | 135 | 1 284 | 31 643 |

Source: Dept. of Social Welfare 1993

Unmarried mothers under the age of 29 years represent an estimated 75% of all unmarried females in receipt of the Lone Parent's Allowance, and 57% of all categories of female recipients. Unmarried mothers under the age of 25 years account for 51% of unmarried female recipients. A longitudinal study of recipients of the Unmarried Mother's Allowance (O'Grady, 1991) found that, for the majority of recipients whose payments terminated, dependency on this social welfare measure was short term (2 years on average) and that termination of the allowance occurred on marriage. However, a significant number (40%) continued in receipt of the allowance (5 years later) and these, when first claiming the allowance, tended to have been younger, unemployed, had unemployed family members, and were living at home with their parents. Barriers to employment and training for lone parents have been identified by the Combat Poverty Agency (1992). These include low pay, almost non-existent publicly funded child care, and the tax/benefit system. Single parents in independent households are among the household types most at risk of poverty (Callan et al., 1988).

## 1.2 Economic Status

The economic status of young people may be ascertained from the Labour Force Survey, 1991, and from the Economic Status of School-Leavers, 1990, the annual school leavers survey of the Dept. of Labour . Data from these surveys is obtained on a sampling procedure. The sample size of the Labour Force Survey , 154 800 persons, represents 4.4% of the total population. Findings from this survey are now described.

Table 2 (a) Estimated Population aged 15-24 years, 1991, Classified by Principal Economic Status and Sex

| Principal Economic Status | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | {Thousand} | |
| In Labour Force | | | |
| At work | 124.1 | 103.4 | 227.4 |
| Unemployed, of which | | | |
| -having lost or given up previous job | 24.2 | 17.0 | 41.2 |
| -looking for first regular job | 18.9 | 11.3 | 30.3 |
| Total | 167.2 | 131.6 | 298.9 |
| Not in Labour Force | | | |
| Student | 147.0 | 149.5 | 296.5 |
| Home duties | 0.3 | 16.0 | 16.3 |
| Retired | - | - | - |
| Unable to work owing to permanent sickness or disability | 2.4 | 2.0 | 4.4 |
| Other | 2.0 | 1.2 | 3.2 |
| Total | 151.7 | 168.7 | 320.3 |
| TOTAL | 318.9 | 300.3 | 619.2 |

Source: CSO,1992

The labour force estimates in this table show that the majority, 51.8%, of 15-24 year olds are not in the labour force. Of this majority 92.6% are classified as students. There are significantly more males in the labour force than females but this may be explained by the significantly larger number of females classified as on home duties. Of the total in the labour force 24% are unemployed, 14% having lost or given up the previous job, and 10% looking for their first regular job.

An alternative analysis, using International Labour Force (ILO) concepts, defines other features of the economic status of the 15-24 age group.

Table 2 (b) Population aged 15-24, 1991, Classified by ILO Economic Status, Age, and Gender

| Economically Active | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Persons in *Employment* | | *(Thousand)* | |
| Fulltime | 119.8 | 97.5 | 217.3 |
| Part-time, not underemployed | 5.6 | 7.0 | 12.5 |
| Part-time, underemployed | 2.6 | 3.0 | 5.6 |
| *Unemployed* Persons | | | |
| Seeking fulltime work | 38.1 | 24.6 | 62.7 |
| Seeking part-time work | 0.8 | 2.0 | 2.8 |
| Not Economically Active | | | |
| Persons marginally attached to the Labour Force | 3.0 | 1.8 | 4.8 |
| Other Persons Not Economically Active | 149.0 | 164.5 | 313.5 |
| TOTAL | 318.9 | 300.3 | 619.2 |

Source: CSO,1992

The economic sectors in which the 15-24 aged cohort are employed are now described.

Table 2 (c) Estimated Persons Aged 15-24 at Work Classified by Economic Sector and Gender

| Economic Sector | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | {Thousand} | |
| Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing | 17.2 | 1.6 | 18.8 |
| Building and Construction | 15.0 | 1.2 | 16.2 |
| Other Production Industries | 39.6 | 24.1 | 63.7 |
| Commerce, Insurance, Finance, and Business | 30.5 | 31.3 | 61.8 |
| Transport, Communication and Storage | 4.0 | 3.3 | 7.3 |
| Professional Services | 4.8 | 20.5 | 25.3 |
| Public Administration and Defence | 4.0 | 3.5 | 7.5 |
| Other | 9.0 | 17.5 | 26.9 |
| Total | 124.1 | 103.4 | 227.4 |

Source: CSO,1992

The majority of the 15-24 age category at work are employed in the manufacturing and service sectors. Marked gender differentiation is evident in the primary (agriculture etc.), construction, manufacturing and service sectors, with males dominating each of these sectors except the service sector. When the figures are compared with estimated total of persons at work in each sector, Table 2 (d), the pattern of gender differentiation holds.

Table 2 (d) Percentage Comparison of Estimates between Age Category 15-24 and the Total of Persons at Work on Occupancy of Economic Sectors by Gender

| Economic Sector | Age Group/All Persons | Male % | Female % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing | 15-24 years | 91 | 09 |
| | All Persons | 92 | 08 |
| Building and Construction | 15-24 years | 93 | 07 |
| | All Persons | 95 | 05 |
| Manufacturing | 15-24 years | 62 | 38 |
| | All Persons | 72 | 28 |
| Transport and Storage | 15-24 years | 56 | 44 |
| | All Persons | 80 | 20 |
| Public Administration and Defence | 15-24 years | 53 | 47 |
| | All Persons | 70 | 30 |
| Professional and Personal Services | 15-24 years | 19 | 81 |
| | All Persons | 38 | 62 |
| Commerce and Business | 15-24 years | 49 | 51 |
| | All Persons | 60 | 40 |

Source: CSO,1992

Gender differences in occupancy are less marked for the 15-24 age group than for all persons for most sectors with the exception of the professional and personal services which is very markedly dominated by females in the 15-24 age category. The general finding may be explained by the estimated number of females on" home duties" in the 25-44 age group: 239 200, in comparison with 1 900 males.

## 1.3 The Economic Status of School-Leavers

The Economic Status of School-Leavers 1990 may be ascertained from the results of a survey carried out by the Economic and Social Research Institute in May/June 1991, allowing for a one full year interval from the time that the school-leavers left the school system. For the purposes of the survey a second level school-leaver is defined as a person who left full-time education in a second level state-aided school and includes persons who would have completed one or more years of vocational education. The sample in the school-leavers survey was 2 216 persons, representing 3.3% of the total number of school-leavers. Table 3 (a) sets out estimates of the economic status of those school-leavers in May/June 1991.

Table 3 (a) Estimated Economic Status of 1989/90 School-Leavers from Second Level Schools in May/June 1991 Classified by Gender

| Status | Male | Female | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *{Thousand}* | | |
| Employed | 12 900 | 11 700 | 24 600 (36.7) | |
| Unemployed - after loss of job | 1 900 | 1 600 | 3 600 (5.3) | |
| Unemployed - seeking first job | 4 800 | 3 300 | 8 000 (12.0) | |
| Student | 11 800 | 12 300 | 24 100 (36.0) | |
| Unavailable for work | 500 | 800 | 1 300 (1.9) | |
| Emigrated | 2 100 | 3 300 | 5 400 (8.1) | |
| Total | 34 000 | | 33 000 | 67 000 (100) |

[Percentages in brackets]

Source: Dept. of Labour, 1991

Table 3 (a) shows that out of an estimated 67 000 school-leavers in 1989-90, 36.7% were in employment one year later while 36% were engaged in further education. A total of 17.3% were unemployed, the majority of whom were seeking their first job. Emigration accounted for a further 8.1%. Compared with survey findings from previous years, the proportion of leavers opting to further their education continued to increase and now accounts for over one third of leavers in comparison with just over a quarter in 1985; unemployment (17.3%) was at its highest level since 1988 when it stood at 19.4%; and the rate of emigration fell for the first time since 1983.

When the data is examined according to level of education attained, the number who terminated school at Leaving Cert. level (age 18 plus) accounted for 77.5% of all leavers. Of this group 45% were engaged in further education one year later. The number who opted to leave school after completing compulsory schooling (age 15) accounted for 17% of all leavers. The influence of level of educational attainment on employment prospects was again evident with higher unemployment experienced by those who left after completing compulsory schooling. Over half (53.4%) of the unqualified leavers were unemployed. According to Hannan (1986) early school-leavers are disproportionately from poor working class families and particularly from families with serious economic and social problems. The majority of early school-leavers come from small towns and rural areas.

The economic sectors in which school-leavers with full-time jobs were working and the type of work they undertook are next described.

Table 3 (b) Economic Sectors in which School-Leavers with Full-time Jobs were Working, May/June 1991, Classified by Gender

| Sector | Total | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Percentages* | | |
| Agriculture | 5.0 | 9.0 | 0.4 |
| Industry | 33.5 | 46.7 | 18.5 |
| Distribution | 26.6 | 22.3 | 31.5 |
| Banking & Finance | 10.8 | 9.9 | 11.9 |
| Transport & Communications | 3.0 | 2.3 | 3.9 |
| Public Administration | 2.2 | 1.4 | 3.1 |
| Professional Services | 6.1 | 0.9 | 12.1 |
| Personal Services | 12.6 | 7.4 | 18.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Dept. of Labour 1991

Industrial employment accounts for one third of all jobs obtained by school-leavers followed by Distribution. In terms of gender differences in occupancy those two sectors were the main sources of employment for males (46.7% and 22.3% respectively). The main sources of employment for females were Distribution (31.5%), Personal Services (18.6%) and Industry (18.5%). When compared with survey findings for the previous year there was a significant decline (12.9%) in Industry in the employment of male unqualified leavers while there was a significant increase (27.3%) in the employment of female unqualified leavers in the Distribution sector.

An analysis of the occupational nature of full-time work undertaken by school-leavers is presented in Table 3 (c).

Table 3 (c) Type of Work Being Undertaken by School-Leavers with Full-Time Jobs, May/June 1991, Classified by Gender

*Percentages*

| Occupation | Total | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|
| Managerial/ Professional | 7.6 | 5.6 | 9.8 |
| Clerical | 24.0 | 12.4 | 37.4 |
| Service | 27.5 | 18.7 | 37.6 |
| Agricultural | 4.7 | 8.2 | 0.7 |
| Manual Skilled & Semi-Skilled | 33.2 | 51.5 | 12.2 |
| Other Manual | 3.0 | 3.5 | 2.4 |

Source: Dept. of Labour 1991

Manual, Service and Clerical occupations represent the major types of work undertaken by school -leavers. Manual (including Agricultural) account for 63.2% of all jobs held by males, particularly by unqualified and early school-leavers. In contrast Clerical and Service account for 75% of all jobs held by females, with Service occupations being mainly held by unqualified and early school-leavers. Over half (53.5%) of unqualified female school-leavers at work were employed in Manual occupations.

## 1.4 Equality and Participation in Education

Ronayne (1992) has drawn attention to two trends of significance in educational participation and equality over the past three decades in Ireland. Firstly, the early school-leaver with minimal or no

qualifications has become socially and economically more marginalised vis-a-vis the transition experience of his/her age group, the vast majority (77.5%) of whom stay in education up to age 18. Evidence of high unemployment among the unqualified (53.4%) and early (33.2%) school-leavers is provided in the Economic Status of School-Leavers, 1990. Secondly, the rise in credentialism in the labour market has significantly reduced access to jobs and places in the occupational structure for the minimally qualified and unqualified school-leaver.

When one examines the social class composition of school-leavers, just over 90% of young people from upper middle class backgrounds complete senior cycle education (age 18) in comparison with 60% from unskilled manual backgrounds (Ronayne 1992). Social class effects on participation in third level education have been investigated by Clancy (1988). These are presented in Table 4 (a).

Table 4 (a) Socio-Economic Status of 1986 Entrants to Higher Education with Participation Ratio by National Population Proportion

| Socio-Economic Groups | Higher Education Entrants 1986 | Participation Ratio 1986 | National Population Under 15 years 1981 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Percentage | Ratio | Percentage |
| Farmers | 20.8 | 1.45 | 14.3 |
| Other Agricultural Occupations | 1.4 | 0.48 | 2.9 |
| Higher Professional | 12.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| Lower Professional | 9.2 | 2.14 | 4.3 |
| Employers & Managers | 15.8 | 1.72 | 9.2 |
| Salaried Employees | 6.2 | 2.3 | 2.7 |
| Intermediate Non-Manual Workers | 12.3 | 1.21 | 10.2 |
| Other Non-Manual Workers | 5.7 | 0.45 | 12.8 |
| Skilled Manual Workers | 12.9 | 0.51 | 25.4 |
| Semi-Skilled Manual Workers | 2.5 | 0.42 | 5.9 |
| Unskilled Manual Workers | 1.3 | 0.16 | 8.2 |

Source: Clancy 1988

The Farmers' social group had the largest percentage (20.8%) of new entrants to third level education followed by Employers & Managers (15.8%). When compared with the proportionate size of the population , the Farmers' group are over represented (1.45 ratio) and so are the Employers & Managers (1.72 ratio). The highest over representation occurs for the Higher Professional group (3.0 ratio).

Five of the social class categories showed serious under representation among the new entrants with four of the ratios within the 0.42 - 0.51 range. Of these five categories all but one included Manual Workers. The Unskilled Manual was the most significantly under represented group (0.16 ratio). Clancy (1988), commenting on trends in the previous decade, notes " the stubborn persistence of marked social inequalities in rates of admission to higher education".

When the data is examined for gender differentials, females are under represented in all but two social class categories in comparison with males. The exceptions are Farmers' and Lower Professional groups. Almost 24% of female new entrants are from the Farmers' group in comparison with 17.5% male new entrants. Inheritance/family business factors may partly explain this difference. Overall, females constitute 48% of new entrants despite the fact that (i) a higher percentage of females complete senior cycle education, and (ii) female new entrants had a higher level of prior academic attainment.

The Dept. of Education sponsored three measures, with European Social Fund support, in the mid -1980s to provide appropriate vocational training for young people in the 15-19 age group who completed compulsory schooling but whose skills are inadequate for the labour market. The Vocational Preparation and Training (VPT) courses 1 and 11 take place in school. VPT 1 is normally undertaken by the early and/or unqualified school-leaver while participants in VPT 11 tend to have school-leaving certificate (age 18) qualifications. The courses are of one year's duration. The Senior Cert., a discrete two year programme, has a particular emphasis on transferable skills and integration with the local employment environment. The most recent participation figures in this type of vocational training are presented in the next table.

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Table 4 (b) Participation in Vocational Preparation and Training Courses 1 and 11, and Senior Cert. by Gender, 1991-92

| Course | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| VPT 1 | 2 747 | 3 169 | 5 196 |
| VPT 11 | 4 542 | 10 670 | 15 212 |
| Senior Cert. | 322 | 471 | 793 |

Source: Dept. of Education 1993

Gender difference in participation is very evident for the VPT 11 programme and may partly be explained by the large number of programmes that specialise in vocational training for the service sector that tends to attract females in terms of occupancy. Numbers in the Senior Cert. programme are comparatively low because of the attraction of other senior cycle programmes in schools. Evaluation of these programmes prior to 1987 showed enhanced job prospects for participants. A joint initiative of the Depts. of Education and Labour, the Youthreach Programme, is aimed at the most vulnerable and disadvantaged young people who have left school at or about the minimum school leaving age without qualifications or vocational training. The course has two distinct phases, Foundation and Progression, each lasting one year. Over 3,300 young people, 60% male - 40% female, began a Youthreach Foundation course in 1991.

The VPT 1, Senior Cert. and Youthreach programmes have functioned well to reduce inequalities in the Irish labour market. The impact of the VPT 11 programme as provision for the less advantaged is less clear. The Combat Poverty Agency (1993) notes that ESF funding directed towards education and training provision for disadvantaged young persons amounted to 13% of all expected ESF receipts in 1992 and expressed concern that such funding may widen rather than reduce inequalities in the Irish labour market.

## 1.5 Emigration

Emigration and exile have been part of the Irish historical experience for four centuries. Migration details and trends have been monitored in the population censuses by means of calculating a residual measure (positive/negative) of net movement of persons, giving an estimate of *net migration* i.e. the difference between the inward and outward population flows. Net migration figures from 1986 onwards are presented in the following table:

Table 5 (a) Estimated Net Migration 1986-1991

| Period | Estimated Net Migration |
|---|---|
| 1986/87 | - 23,000 |
| 1987/88 | - 42,000 |
| 1988/89 | - 44,000 |
| 1989/90 | - 23,000 |
| 1990/91 | - 2,000 |
| Total 1986/91 | - 134.000 |

Source: CSO,1993

The outward flow of persons from Ireland exceeds the inward flow (negative symbol) for each year of the intercensal period 1986-91, peaking in 1988/89. In that year Ireland had the highest level of negative net migration in the EC (Spain was the only other country with negative net migration). The 1990/91 estimate may be explained by the economic recession in the main destination countries, UK and USA, resulting in less persons migrating to and more persons returning from those countries. While there is no live register of migrants, some demographic characteristics of Irish migrants have been collected by the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants (IECE). These are summarised in Table 5 (b).

Table 5 (b) Main Destination, Age, Educational Qualifications and Reasons for Leaving of a Sample of Irish Migrants (N=4 323)

MAIN DESTINATION OF EMIGRANTS

| Destination | Percentage |
|---|---|
| UK | 49.41% |
| USA | 10.92% |
| Australia | 2.41% |
| Europe* | 10.68% |

[ * Refers to mainland Europe. A total of 461 who gave UK as their original destination stated they had moved from UK to mainland Europe during 1991/92]

AGE OF EMIGRANTS

| Age Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Under 20 years | 7.2 |
| 20-24 years | 36.8 |
| 25-28 years | 23.1 |
| Under 28 | 67.1 |

| EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS | |
|---|---|
| Highest Level Attained | Percentage |
| First | 30.9 |
| Second | 51.0 |
| Third | 9.6 |
| No Response | 8.5 |

| REASONS FOR LEAVING | |
|---|---|
| Category | Percentage |
| Unemployed | 58.01 |
| Looking for a Job | 9.64 |
| Going to A Job | 23.87 |
| Social Reasons | 6.7 |
| No Response | 1.78 |

Source: IECE Emigrant Survey, 1991/92

Table 5 (b) shows that the direction and intensity of the Irish migratory flow has to date been strongly polarised in the direction of English speaking countries. The majority of migrants are under the age of 28 years. Most of them have completed second level education, though a significant number (31%) fall within the early school-leaver category. Employment is the prime reason given for emigration. However the fact of being unemployed is not a good predictor of migration behaviour. Flanagan (1993) investigated the migration attitude, intention and behaviour of an economically disadvantaged suburban community with an unemployment rate of 70%. While the majority of those surveyed would consider emigrating for employment, the prime reason reported for not emigrating was the loss of the family/friends support system - dependence on the familiar. Only 5% of a sample of 100 adults had emigrated in the past. Flanagan concluded that, additionally, lack of confidence, education, skills, isolation and the money needed to emigrate successfully, acted as real constraints on actual migrant behaviour of the less advantaged.

The National Economic and Social Council (NESC) commissioned a national study in 1991 on a range of variables associated with emigration. The NESC study found that (i) the expected or actual failure to satisfy one's occupational aspirations locally was the main personal motive explaining migration intentions and behaviour, (ii) the better educated middle class were most dissatisfied with the Irish opportunity system and most likely to emigrate - emigration is seen as a normal option in their career planning, (iii) geographical remoteness, farming dominance and the associated level of employment were also correlated with emigration and internal migration, (iv) previous migration experience (e.g. rural to urban) and involvement in migrant networks were strong predictors of emigration decisions, and (v) the majority of emigrants left only after a substantial period in the Irish labour force.

Gavin (1993) compared the migrant behaviour of Irish and Turkish people (Turkey is the largest migrant origin country for the EC). He found that Turkish migrants showed (i) a clear preference for destination countries that render highest economic benefits, (ii) no particular language preference in choice of destination country, and (iii) they tended to migrate as family units rather than as individuals. The young Irish migrant differs from the Turkish counterpart on each of these behaviours. This comparison and the studies of Flanagan (1993) and NESC (1991) highlight the specificity of needs of different migrant groups, in particular with respect to guidance, training and support.

The relationship between educational attainment and emigration behaviour is next examined. Given the high percentage (45%) of school-leavers with Leaving Cert. qualifications (age 18) who go on to higher education in Ireland and the NESC findings above, what are the emigration patterns of recipients of higher education awards? Table 5 (c) gives a summary for 1991.

Table 5 (c) Overseas Employment Pattern Classified by Award Type of Award Recipients in Higher Education 1991

| Award Type | Percentage Employed Overseas |
|---|---|
| Primary Degree | 12.6 |
| Higher Degree | 16.6 |
| Sub-Degree | 7.3 |
| Teacher's Diploma (Second-Level) | 13.2 |
| Teacher Education Degree | 2.4 |

| Award Type | UK | Other EC | N. America |
|---|---|---|---|
| | [Percentage] | | |
| Primary Degree | 46.6 | 29.0 | 11.5 |
| Higher Degree | 34.9 | 25.0 | 13.5 |
| Sub-Degree | 62.7 | 22.5 | 4.8 |
| Teacher's Diploma & Teacher Education Degree | Information Not Available | | |

Source: Higher Education Authority, 1991

Degree recipients, with the exception of Teacher Education degrees, are more likely than sub-degree recipients to be in employment abroad. The UK is the preferred destination country particularly with sub-degree recipients, and at least one fifth of each of three recipient categories opted for EC countries other than the UK. Sub-degree recipients are under represented in choice of North America. It should be noted that the proportion of 1991 award recipients of each category employed abroad was at its lowest level since the mid - 1980s, reflecting the effects of the economic recession.

The Economic Status of School-Leavers 1990 survey, referred to in Section 1.3 above, provides some indication of emigration trends among different categories of school-leaver.

Table 5 (d) Emigration of School-Leavers 1989/90 by Level of Educational Attainment

| | *Percentage* |
|---|---|
| No Qualifications | 2.1 |
| Inter/Group Cert. (end of compulsory schooling) | 3.9 |
| Leaving Cert. (age 18) | 9.4 |

Source: Dept. of Labour, 1991

Table 5 (d) shows that the better educated school-leaver is more likely to have emigrated, reflecting a consistent pattern of the 1980s. Emigration among school-leavers peaked in 1988 and has been in decline since then. The 1990 school-leavers survey has produced some interesting data on school-leavers attitudes and intentions towards migration. The questions asked and responses provided are reported in the next table.

Table 5 (e) Responses of School-Leavers to Questions on Attitude and Intention to Migrate from the Survey of School-Leavers 1989/90

| Q38 Have you ever considered leaving this part of the country to live and work elsewhere ? | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 49.5% |
| No | 50.5% |

| Q39A Do you intend to leave? | |
|---|---|
| Definitely Yes | 14.9% |
| Probably Yes | 30.7% |
| Probably No | 25.4% |
| Definitely No | 29.0% |

| Q39B Where do you intend to go? | |
|---|---|
| Elsewhere in Ireland | 19.4% |
| UK | 34.6% |
| Other EC | 18.9% |
| North America | 18.3% |
| Rest of World | 8.8% |

Source: ESRI Special Tabulation, 1993

Table 5 (e) shows that approximately half of the school-leavers never considered leaving their own locality. They had little or no intention of leaving. Of those who expressed an intention to leave, the majority (52.9%) had a preference in destination for English speaking countries, with almost equal numbers preferring other EC and internal migration. When the same data is examined on the basis of urban/rural and non-farmer/farmer origin of the school-leaver, no difference from the total sample finding in Table 5 (e) occurs in consideration of leaving one's own locality. A significantly larger number (52.8% vs 44.1%) of rural/farmer origin school-leaver expressed intention to leave. Internal migration (32.5%) was the preferred of all destinations for the farmer origin school-leaver and the second highest preference ( 28.2%) of the rural school-leaver.

A significant inverse relationship between the educational attainment level of school-leavers and attitude and intention to migrate is demonstrated when this data is analysed according to level of educational qualifications.

Table 5 (f) Responses of School-Leavers by Level of Educational Qualifications to Questions on Attitude and Intention to Migrate from the Survey of School-Leavers 1989/90

| Q38 Have you ever considered leaving this part of the country to live and work elsewhere? | No Quals. | Inter/Group | Leaving/Matric |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 31.2% | 40.3% | 53.0% |
| No | 68.8% | 59.7% | 47.0% |

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Q39A Do you intend to leave?

| | No Quals. | Inter/Group | Leaving/Matric |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes(D) | 15.0% | 11.2% | 15.7% |
| Yes(P) | 14.8% | 24.5% | 33.3% |
| No(P) | 24.9% | 28.9% | 24.7% |
| No(D) | 45.3% | 35.4% | 26.3% |

(D) = Definitely
(P) = Probably

Q39B Where do you intend to go?

| | No Quals. | Inter/Group | Leaving/Matric |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ireland | 0.0% | 11.0% | 21.7% |
| UK | 76.3% | 53.6% | 29.5% |
| Other EC | 0.0% | 9.8% | 21.3% |
| N.America | 21.1% | 12.7% | 19.1% |
| Rest of World | 2.5% | 12.9% | 8.5% |

Source: ESRI Special Tabulation, 1993

According to Table 5 (f) over two thirds of school-leavers without qualifications gave no consideration to living and working elsewhere and expressed little or no intention of leaving. Of those who expressed an intention to leave, 97.4% had a preference in destination for English speaking countries while internal migration and migration to other EC countries were not considered at all. On the other hand, among the better qualified school-leavers the majority had considered living and working elsewhere; 49% expressed an intention to leave; and the variation in preferences in destination was more evenly distributed with migration to EC countries other than the UK ranked as highly as internal migration.

The experiences and needs of young Irish migrants have been documented in a report published by the Action Group for Irish Youth (AGIY) in 1991. Focussing on young Irish emigrants in London, 83% had

been living with their parents immediately before they had left Ireland. The desire to find suitable work was the main reason (84%) they had decided to emigrate. Three-quarters would have stayed in Ireland if suitable work was available. Informal advice by friends and relatives was the most important source of help in planning for emigration. Forty one percent (41%) of the sample had never had a job in Ireland. Of those who had a job the majority (58%) had done manual work. A much lower proportion (34%) continued in manual work in London with 72% expressing satisfaction with their present job there, supporting the NESC finding of the relationship between emigration and dissatisfaction with occupational attainment in Ireland. Two thirds stated that they would like additional training or education in London in order to widen the scope of career opportunities. Finding suitable accomodation in London on a long term basis was a barrier to feeling settled there. Significantly more people (47%) felt that their social life had become worse since they came to London. London was described as large and unfriendly with respondents experiencing increased levels of depression, anxiety and sleeplessness. A half of those interviewed experienced anti-Irish prejudice and racism. While just over half of the interviewees described their experiences since leaving Ireland as positive, less than a third planned to stay in London, with similar proportions planning to return to Ireland or to go elsewhere, mainly the USA or Australia.

The use of the UK as a stepping stone in the migration path has been noted previously in the IECE Emigrants Survey (1991/92) - see Table 5 (b) above. Britain's general trade union, the GMB, has recently (June,1993) drawn attention to a dramatic drop in the number of Irish nationals living and working in the UK between April 1990 and November 1992. Using Census returns and Labour Force Survey details, the GMB noted a decline of 28% in the total population of Irish nationals, a decline of 29% in the number of Irish nationals in employment, and a decline of 15% among economically inactive Irish nationals in the UK. The economic recession is blamed for these changes. The GMB concluded that the Irish nationals have returned to Ireland or moved on to third countries in search of work.

## 1.6 Young People's Perceptions of Their Education and Employment Experiences

The attitudes, intentions and actual experience of emigration to the UK of young people have been documented in the previous section. In this section young people again "speak", this time about their level of satisfaction with their education for employment, work and other adult roles, their employment/unemployment situation, what their job aspirations are, and what job search techniques they used. The data is based on responses to school-leavers surveys.

In a longitudinal study of school-leavers Hannan and Shorthall (1991) identified three broad pathways into adult life that exist among school-leavers: (i) relatively directly into somewhat secure employment and associated adult roles - particularly among the better qualified; (ii) a deprived group that endures high levels of unemployment, particularly among the poorly qualified; and (iii) "withdrawal" from the labour force into "home duties" by female school-leavers from the most poorly qualified groups. School-leavers in the study had in general a low opinion of the utility of their education as a preparation for work life. Positive assessments increased with educational level, with specialisation in vocational-technical subjects, the taking of post-school vocational (VPT) courses, and remoteness of place of origin. The most dissatisfied respondents had poor levels of education and tended to come from more urbanised areas, had a poor employment history, and lived in high unemployment contexts. High achievers criticised their schooling for its over academic bias and failure to prepare people for work or for the practical vocational demands of life after school. The criticisms of early leavers centred around school management, organisational arrangements in school or the poor quality of relationships with teachers.

Level of satisfaction with their employment situation was requested in the Survey of School-Leavers 1991. The following is a summary of results:

Table 6 (a) Level of Satisfaction with their own Employment Situation by Urban/Rural Origin of School-Leavers 1989/90

How satisfied are you with your present employment (unemployment) situation?

| | *Percentage* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Feeling | Urban | Rural | Total |
| Very Satisfied | 25.9 | 27.2 | 26.7 |
| Satisfied | 44.7 | 48.8 | 47.1 |
| Dissatisfied | 16.3 | 14.0 | 14.9 |
| Very Dissatisfied | 13.0 | 10.0 | 11.3 |

Source: ESRI Special Tabulation, 1993

Almost three quarters of those interviewed were satisified with their employment situation, with those of rural origin expressing appreciably more satisfaction than their urban counterparts.

Those who were dissatisfied were asked what type of job they would like to get and would they be able to access that job locally.

Table 6 (b) Type of Job Sought by Dissatisfied School-Leavers (1989/90) and Perceived Likelihood of Obtaining Such a Job in Their Own Locality

Q40B Of the jobs for which you would be qualified, what type of job would you like to get?

| | *Percentage* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Job Type | Urban | Rural | Total |
| Managerial/ Professional | 4.2 | 11.8 | 8.3 |
| Clerical | 24.8 | 24.6 | 24.7 |
| Service Occupations | 42.3 | 26.9 | 33.9 |
| Agriculture | 0.6 | 4.0 | 2.7 |
| Manual Skilled/ Unskilled | 25.0 | 26.8 | 26.0 |
| Other Manual | 3.0 | 6.0 | 4.7 |

Q40C How likely is it that you will get this type of job while living in this area?

| | Percentage | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Likelihood | Urban | Rural | Total |
| Very Likely | 7.9 | 5.3 | 6.5 |
| Likely | 40.3 | 30.2 | 34.8 |
| Unlikely | 31.7 | 37.9 | 35.1 |
| Very Unlikely | 20.0 | 26.6 | 23.6 |

Source: ESRI Special Tabulation, 1993

Service, Manual and Clerical occupations are the most sought after categories of jobs by those expressing dissatisfaction with their present employment situation. Significant urban/rural differences arise for managerial/professional and service sector jobs, with mainly rural school-leavers seeking managerial/professional and mainly urban seeking service occupations. The majority of the dissatisfied perceive that it is unlikely that they will obtain the jobs they seek in their own locality and this holds more for the rural than for the urban school-leaver.

The School-Leavers Survey 1989/90 also sought to ascertain how employed school-leavers first heard about their present job and the main methods school-leavers used to search for work.

Table 6 (c) Sources of Information on Present Job and Main Methods Used by School-Leavers 1989/90 to Seek Work

Q19 How did you first hear about your present job?

| | *Percentage* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Source | Urban | Rural | Total |
| FAS | 9.0 | 9.0 | 9.0 |
| Newspaper Ad. | 7.4 | 12.1 | 10.1 |
| Contacting Employer | 30.5 | 19.7 | 24.2 |
| Personal Contact | 41.4 | 47.2 | 44.7 |
| School Guidance | 8.6 | 7.1 | 7.7 |
| Private Agency | 1.1 | 1.8 | 1.5 |
| Other | 2.1 | 3.1 | 2.7 |

Q22 What are/were the main ways in which you look for work?

| | *Mean Ranking* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Method | Urban | Rural | Total |
| FAS | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Private Agency | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Advert-isements | 1.0 | 0.9 | 1.0 |
| Writing to Employers | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Placing Ads. | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Personal Contacts | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Other | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 |

Source: ESRI Special Tabulation, 1993

Table 6 (c) shows that personal contact was the main source for first hearing about their present job, followed by contacting the employer directly and newspaper advertisements. These also received the highest mean rankings as methods of looking for work. Personal contact and newspaper ads. were more used by rural while direct contact with employers was more used by urban school-leavers.

## 1.7 Labour Market Opportunity and Skills/Qualifications Demand

In a longitudinal study of school-leavers Breen (1991) found a very close link between labour market outcomes for young people and the level of educational qualifications they possess i.e. the higher the level of educational qualifications the greater the chance of being employed five years later. Labour market differentials according to educational qualifications increased over time and almost all of this increase occurred within the the first 24 to 30 months after leaving school. While within the labour force the experiences of young men and women in terms of employment were very similiar, unqualified women had the lowest rate of all labour force participation, and their rate declined the longer they had been out of school. In addition to level of educational qualifications one's labour market record was a critical variable in hiring decisions by employers, with young people who had a previous job having a better chance of becoming employed than those who have never worked. Participation in government programmes of training and temporary employment increased the likelihood of unemployed young people getting work in the short term but this effect did not persist one year later. In terms of geographical mobility at the point of transition for school-leavers, Sexton, Whelan and Williams (1988) found that the take up of a first regular job involved a change of residence in less than 10% of cases. Mobility was higher for girls than for boys and was closely related to level of educational attainment. The attainment of higher qualifications enabled young people to be more mobile in taking up their first employment.

In a recently published manpower forecasting study, Corcoran, Hughes and Sexton (1993) described occupational trends for the period 1990 - 96. The size of the labour force is set to increase by just under 5%. However the aggregrate change will be unevenly distributed across occupations. The numbers in agricultural occupations are expected to fall by more than 17%, accounting for less than 12% of all employment by 1996 as compared with 15% in 1990. Only two other groups are expected to experience employment declines: labourers and unskilled workers (7.9%), and transport and communication workers (3.7%). Otherwise employment in non-agricultural occupations is expected to grow slightly under 9%. The following table gives the expected percentage growth.

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Table 7 Forecasted Employment Change by Occupation in Non-Agricultural Occupations 1990 - 96

| Occupation Group | Percentage Growth |
|---|---|
| Managers/ Proprietors | 16.0 |
| Skilled Maintenance | 14.3 |
| Security Workers | 14.0 |
| Associate Professionals | 14.0 |
| Professional Workers | 12.0 |
| Personal Service Workers | 9.0 |
| Clerical Workers | 8.0 |
| Skilled/Semi-Skilled Production Workers | 8.0 |
| Sales Workers | 7.0 |
| Production Operatives | 6.0 |
| Foremen | 6.0 |

Source: FAS/ESRI Manpower Forecasting Studies 1993

This forecast suggests that there will be an increase in opportunity for persons with high levels of educational attainment and/or training, and a decrease in opportunity for persons unqualified in education and/or training. The female share of total employment in the economy is set to increase from 33% in 1990 to 35.4% in 1996. Significant increases are expected in the female proportion in managerial and sales occupations, and in those professional and technical occupations e.g. business, engineering and science, where women's presence has been increasing rapidly from a low original base.

## 1.8 Values and Interests of Young Irish People

Some of the values and interests of young Irish people (age15-24 years) may be ascertained from the "Young Europeans in 1990" report (Eurobarometer 34.2). Eighty eight percent were very/fairly satisified with their life in general. Their main life interests were sports (50%), arts and entertainment (41%), the environment (38%), social problems (29%) and the Third World issues (27%). They identified unemployment (90%), drugs (57%) and AIDS (50%) as the major problems facing young people today, recording the highest concern for unemployment among respondents from all Member States. Sports clubs or associations (50%) and youth organisations (19%) were the most stated groups that young Irish people belong to. They had the highest occasional and regular usage level (45%) of youth associations in the EC.

While two thirds of respondents expressed a positive attitude towards the EC, Irish youth had a low visiting rate to other EC countries. France was their first choice of destination both for work and

study. They identified language difficulties (36%), lack of money (19%) and of information (17%) as the main problems in going abroad to work or study or train. This is consistent with the next finding that Irish youth had the lowest average number of known or spoken foreign languages in the EC. French was the language that most (69%) had learned and "spoke well enough to take part in a conversation" (26%).

Their choice of study was mainly influenced by career choice (44%), chances of obtaining a job at the end of study (34%) and interest (33%). The actuarial approach to choice of study was higher than the EC average. Parents (78%), friends (34%) and school's guidance service (19%) were the chief sources for consultation when making life choices. Parents (34%), advertisements (24%) and contacting employers (23%) were their main methods for finding their present job, the use of advertisements being the highest in the EC. Ireland was among the countries that had the highest proportion of young people in full-time employment. Eighty one percent expressed satisfaction with their current job. When questioned about young people's experience of discrimination in education, training, getting a job or at work, they identified the young unemployed (44%) and the young handicapped (42%) as the most discriminated types of people of their own age, their identification of the young unemployed being the highest in the EC.

## 1.9 Summary

Young people under the age of 29 years represent 51% of the total population of Ireland, giving Ireland the highest proportion of youth in its population in the EC. Fifty nine percent live in urban and 41% live in rural areas. Married females outnumber married males by a 2:1 ratio for the 15-24 age category. Ireland had the highest fertility rate per woman and highest reproduction rate in the EC in 1991. There has been a steady downward trend in the number of marriages registered and a substantial rise in the proportion of births to single women. (1.1)

The majority of the 15-24 age category are pursuing education and training courses. Of the total of this category in the labour force 76% are employed. The majority of those employed work in the manufacturing and service sectors. Males are over represented in the agricultural, construction and manufacturing sectors while females are over represented in the professional and personal services sector. (1.2)

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Over one third of school-leavers opt to further their education with a similar proportion obtaining employment. Unemployment and emigration account for the status of 25% of school-leavers. 77.5% of all leavers terminated school at age 18. High unemployment occurs for unqualified and early school-leavers. Of school-leavers with full-time jobs almost two thirds of males work in manual occupations while three quarters of females work in clerical and service occupations. (1.3)

There are marked social class effects in participation in education. Over 90% of young people from upper middle class backgrounds complete senior cycle education (age 18) in comparison with 60% from unskilled manual backgrounds. At third level education the children of manual worker groups are under represented, with the unskilled manual most significantly under represented. Dept. of Education interventions in the area of vocational training at second level have had a positive impact in improving the employment prospects of the unqualified and early school-leaver. (1.4)

Ireland had the highest negative net migration in the EC. The majority of Irish migrants are under the age of 28 years and have completed second level education. Employment is the prime reason given for emigration. The direction and intensity of the Irish migratory flow has been polarised in the direction of English speaking countries. Predictors of emigration behaviour include unfulfilled occupational aspirations, high educational attainment, geographical remoteness and experience of internal migration. Choice of EC countries other than the UK as emigration destination increases with level of education attained. There is a significant inverse relationship between level of educational attainment of school-leavers and attitude and intention to migrate. 69% of school-leavers without qualifications never considered migration in comparison with 47% of those who completed senior cycle. Similar proportions expressed that they had no intention of leaving. Loss of family/friends, lack of confidence, education, skills, isolation and the money needed to emigrate successfully were reported as real constraints on the actual migrant behaviour of the less advantaged. A developing trend of using migration to the UK as a stepping stone to migrating to other EC countries was noted. (1.5)

Young people's perception of their schooling was positively correlated with level of educational attainment. A high degree of satisfaction with their employment was expressed by school-leavers with full-time jobs. Personal contact and contacting employers directly were the main sources (69%) for first hearing about their present job. The majority of those dissatisfied perceived it unlikely that they would obtain the jobs they seek in their own locality and this holds more for the rural than for the urban school-leaver. (1.6)

Labour force participation was very closely linked to the level of educational qualifications possessed by young people. Such qualifications were a critical variable in hiring decisions by employers. Unqualified women had the lowest rate of all labour force participation. Manpower forecasts to 1996 suggest that there will be an increase in opportunity for persons with high levels of education/training and a decrease in opportunity for persons unqualified in education/training. Employment is expected to grow for all occupational groups except agriculture, labourers and unskilled workers, and transport and communication workers. (1.7)

The vast majority of young Irish people were very/fairly satisfied with their lives. They identified unemployment as the major problem facing young people today. Two thirds expressed a positive attitude to the EC. Career choice and employment prospects were the most significant factors in choice of course of study. Parents were the chief source for consultation when making life choices. They identified young unemployed and young handicapped as the most discriminated types of people of their own age. (1.8)

Chapter 2

# VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN IRELAND

## 2.1 Introduction

The term "guidance" i.e. the application of knowledge and skills, derived from the behavioural sciences, to the process of empowering people to make life choices, has mainly been associated to date with the provision of a guidance and counselling service in second and third level education, and rehabilitation . In other settings guidance has the connotation of advice and information.

## 2.2 Second Level Education

The major components of this service are career, educational and personal/social counselling These are undertaken on both an individual and a group basis. Guidance counsellors use a range of information materials, assessment techniques and experiential learning methods. To be employed as a guidance counsellor one must normally possess a primary degree, a teaching qualification and have successfully completed a one year post-graduate course in guidance and counselling in the Psychology Dept. at the University Colleges of either Cork or Dublin or similar institutions. The work of guidance counsellors is monitored by the Psychological Service of the Dept. of Education who develop policy for guidance and support the guidance counsellors in their work. Schools with 500 pupils or more may appoint one recognised guidance counsellor in a full-time capacity while schools with 350 to 499 pupils may make such an appointment on a half-time basis. The consequences of these conditions of appointment are that pupils in very large size schools run the risk of receiving an inadequate service while pupils in schools of under 350 pupils may receive no service at all. While 6% of schools have over 800 pupils, 44% of schools have less than 350 pupils. The majority of smaller schools are in rural areas. A further consequence is that the early school-leaver is less likely to access the school's guidance service given that schools tend to concentrate vocational counselling in senior cycle.

## 2.3 Third Level Education

Guidance counsellors work in Careers and Appointments Offices in university colleges and in some technical colleges. The components of the service they provide and the professional qualifications

required to carry out the job are similar to those pertaining in second level education. There is a strong emphasis on vocational information, job search skills and placement for final year students. Policy, monitoring, and development of the service is the responsibility of the individual college. Approximately 30% of colleges of higher education have a full-time vocational counselling service.

## 2.4 Rehabilitation

The National Rehabilitation Board (NRB) has responsibility for providing an assessment, vocational guidance, training and placement service for people with disabilities. Vocational Officers working in coordination with the Psychological Service of the NRB generally possess qualifications in psychology, guidance and counselling or social science. The service employs 45 Vocational Officers and 7 Psychologists based in 6 regions throughout the country. Over 4,000 people with disabilities annually use the service.

## 2.5 Training Agencies

FAS (Employment and Training Authority) provides an employment/recruitment service and operates training and employment programmes. FAS staff give advice and information on training and employment opportunities at their Employment Service Offices and undertake screening of applicants for the training courses that FAS itself runs. Their training courses contain a module on job search skills. Personnel responsible for giving advice and information normally undergo short training courses of one to three weeks duration. The other training agencies: CERT (Hotel, Catering, and Tourism), TEAGASC (Agriculture and Horticulture), BIM (Fishery), Coillte (Forestry) and VEC (Vocational and Technical Education) provide advice and information on request. They screen applicants for their training courses. All of the training agencies support the work of guidance counsellors in schools, colleges, and universities by means of information provision and exchange.

## 2.6 Other Information Centres

Youth Information Centres play a valuable role in giving advice and information on a wide range of subjects to young people, particularly to the less advantaged. The centres are administered by a variety of youth organisations and most are funded by the Youth Affairs Section of the Dept. of

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Education. They engage in outreach activities to bring their services to young people. In terms of vocational information the centres make accessible to their clients information supplied by the agencies, schools and colleges that provide vocational education and training. The work of the centres is monitored by the National Youth Information Monitoring Committee.

Unemployment Resource Centres, set up by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, act as a bridge between unemployment and employment for their users. Funding for the centres comes from a variety of sources: FAS, Trade Unions, local, national, and international organisations, and from their own fundraising activities. The centres primarily provide social welfare and work-related information and advice. Many have taken on a developmental role in providing adult education courses with the support of the local Vocational Education Committees. The provision of information on vocational education and training is an essential part of the services provided.

## 2.7 Vocational Counselling for Adults

Vocational, professional, technical and adult education courses are mainly provided in vocational and technical colleges and in community and comprehensive schools. In 1991 136,335 persons participated in those courses with females outnumbering males by a 2:1 ratio in participation. There is no formal provision for vocational counselling for adults at present. However, the importance of vocational counselling in meeting the needs of the long-term unemployed has been recognised in recent initiatives in adult guidance undertaken in the Area Based Response to Long Term Unemployment, as part of the Programme for Economic and Social Progress agreed between the Government and the social partners.

## 2.8 Vocational Information Contact Points and Target Populations

The following is a table of information contact points through which vocational information is made available:

| Location | Number of Contact Points | Target Population |
|---|---|---|
| Second Level Schools | 791 | Students (Age 12-19) |
| Public Libraries (Branches) | 334 | Youth and Adult Population |
| FAS Employment Offices/ Training Centres | 70 | Adult Population (Age 16 plus) |
| Youth Information Centres | 22 | Youth Population |
| Centres for the Unemployed | 24 | Youth and Adult Population |
| Colleges of Higher Education | 10 | Students (Age 17 plus) |

The quality of information provision at these contact points varies according to financial and physical resources and the availability of trained personnel.

## 2.9 Formal vs Less Formal Guidance Provision

Reference has been made in Section 1.9 to the significance of parents/family and friends as less formal sources of guidance for young people. Guidance counsellors in second level schools encourage the involvement of parents/family in guidance activities but the extent and degree of participation is unrecorded. Similarly many schools involve employers in providing work experience, work shadowing, career visits, career talks, interview preparation and enterprise education, but the extent and degree of participation is also largely unrecorded. In some areas there are formal School-Industry Links Schemes which coordinate those interlinked guidance activities. Areas of high socio-economic disadvantage and of geographical remoteness present additional challenges to the existing model of formal guidance provision and to the use of less formal guidance sources. Ronayne (1992) examined the role of youth service provision in the context of addressing disadvantage arising during the transition from education to the labour market. He found a direct relationship between

non-participation in any form of youth provision and educational level and gender. Young women with no qualifications had the highest rate of non-participation (60%) followed by young men with no qualifications (40%). These percentages increased to 76% and 57% respectively when the data was examined for non-sports related provision. The author drew attention to the need for developing forms of youth provision for potential early school-leavers, sensitive to supporting as well as enhancing their involvement in formal education.

## 2.10 European Dimension in Vocational Information and Guidance

To date PETRA and EURES have been the chief catalysts in introducing a European dimension to vocational information and guidance. Under PETRA Action 111 two national centres have been set up, one in the PETRA NCU, the other in FAS. They act as vocational information contact points at both national and international levels and stimulate transnational vocational guidance activities. Their clients are vocational information mediators and users. Additional projects under Action 111 in which Irish personnel are involved include the Training of Trainers, Development of Joint Quality Standards and the Role of Parents in Guidance. PETRA has also supported financially the development of a national database on vocational education and training, Qualifax, and a handbook on higher education, training and work in Europe for use by guidance personnel and their target populations, published by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors.

Ireland is one of four test centres for the EURES database of job vacancies and of information on living and working conditions and this is located in FAS. Under the EURES programme Euro-advisers are being placed in the main FAS Employment Service offices in Ireland. FAS has also positioned Employment Services Officers in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK.

The Institute of Guidance Counsellors, which represents professionals in guidance, is an organisational member of EURO-ORIENTATION.

Ireland is also involved in the EUROCOUNSEL Action Research Programme which seeks to identify ways to improve the quality and effectiveness of information, advice, guidance and counselling services to the prevention and solution of the problem of the long-term unemployed. Two labour market areas, one rural and one urban, are participating in the programme.

## 2.11 Summary

In practice formal vocational counselling services for the majority of young people are provided in medium to large sized second level schools. Once the young people have left school, formal provision is patchy or non-existent. Training agencies provide advice, information and screening. The development of less formal sources of guidance, Youth Information Centres and Resource Centres for the Unemployed, is relatively new. Evaluations of their usage and of the services they provide have been positive. Because of their geographical location, the benefits they bring tend to favour users living in urban areas. Recent initiatives in adult guidance for the long-term unemployed will address access issues in both rural and urban areas. Less formal guidance sources, parents/family and employers, are involved in guidance activities in second level schools but the degree and extent of involvement are largely unrecorded. Difficulties in using some less formal guidance sources are exemplified in participation rates in youth service provision among unqualified school-leavers, particularly girls.

Finally, the European dimension in vocational information and guidance is currently been progressed through PETRA and EURES.

# Chapter 3

# CASE STUDIES

In this chapter two focussed case studies are presented. The target groups selected are young people living in rural areas in the west of Ireland. The young people in the first case study are from North Mayo and they are all unemployed. The young people in the second case study are from the Letterfrack area of Co. Galway and they represent a mix of unemployed, participants in training, and employed.

## CASE STUDY 1: NORTH MAYO

A comprehensive demographic and economic profile of North Mayo is presented in the report on Phase 1 of the EUROCOUNSEL Action Research Programme on Ireland by Duggan and Ronayne (1993).

### 3.1 Demography

The area of North Mayo is situated in the north-west of Ireland. It is a predominantly rural area and the majority of its 68,500 inhabitants (approx.) live outside the larger urban areas. There are just two towns of significant size in the area, Castlebar and Ballina, each with a population of between 6,000 and 7,000. Since 1986 the area has experienced severe population decline, with a 10% decrease among the 15-28 age category in the inter-censal period 1986 - 91 almost completely attributable to outward migration. In some of the rural areas the proportion of the population in the 15-24 age category is as low as 14 per cent.

### 3.2 Local Economic Context

North Mayo is characterised by poor economic infrastructure, declining agriculture and limited industrial development. The proportion of the labour force engaged in agriculture is, at over one third, twice as high as that for Ireland as a whole. Farms are small (over half are less than 12 hectares) with most of the land of mixed to poor quality. Consequently farm incomes are low and most small farmers rely heavily on welfare payments. In rural areas adjacent to larger towns there is some opportunity to earn off-the-farm income. In the other areas farmers experience a considerable degree of underemployment.

Much of industrial employment is clustered around the two main towns. Manufacturing employment accounts for approximately 20% of the local labour force compared with 30% nationally. The peripheral nature of North Mayo makes access to both national and European markets difficult. The poor general infracture is an additional deterrent to industrial investment in the area.

Service sector employment accounts for approximately 45% of the local labour force. There is some potential for development in this sector, especially tourism, due to the high scenic quality of the area and the availability of good fishing. The possibility for small farmers and others, affected by underemployment, to engage in activities related to tourism, is currently the subject of local enterprise development initiatives.

### 3.3 The Labour Force

The total labour force is approximately 23,000 persons. Its age and gender structure varies across sectors. Agriculture is dominated by older male small farm holders. Most employment in manufacturing is held by males engaged in semi or unskilled occupations. Jobs in the service sector are most likely to be held by women.

Registered unemployment in North Mayo has increased from an unemployment rate of just over 19% in 1986 to approximately 26% in 1991. Of 6,158 persons registered unemployed in 1991, 29% were under the age of 25 years. In this age group 60% were male and 40% were female. The long term unemployment rate of 53% was considerably in excess of the national average. In the more rural area of Belmullet, the long term unemployment rate stood at 63%. The figures given above relate only to registered unemployment. They do not take into account the level of underemployment in agriculture and the impact of outward migration, particularly among the young people.

### 3.4 Provision of Vocational Counselling Services

As pointed out in Chapter 2, the main providers of vocational counselling services to young people in Ireland are second level schools but the level of service in those schools is contingent on the size of the school population. There are 31 second level schools in the whole of County Mayo. Fourteen of these schools (45%) have less than 350 pupils. Nine out of ten vocational schools in the area fall into this category. It is therefore most likely that a significant percentage of young people have no access to a vocational counselling service before they leave school.

FAS, the national employment and training authority, provides a registration and placement service, and provides information on training courses and employment schemes at its Employment Services Offices in the two large towns, Ballina and Castlebar. The ratio of Employment Services Officer (ESO) to the number of unemployed persons in North Mayo is one to 1,500. FAS provides training courses at its Training Centres in those towns. The courses include apprenticeship training, specific skills training, and special provision for youth training. There is also special provision for members of the travelling community at Ballina. In general, most FAS training provision is availed of by young, single people. Educational criteria for accessing certain forms of FAS training provision, notably specific skills training, are quite high. Over 400 persons take part in Social Employment Schemes (SES), funded by FAS, and targetted mainly at the long-term unemployed. The SES offers part-time work placements of 12 months duration in projects sponsored by non-commercial interests e.g. local authorities, Centres for the Unemployed, schools, and community groups. The provision of skills enhancement or vocational guidance in SES schemes is extremely rare. The minimum age for participation in SES is 25 years.

The Vocational Education Committee (VEC) plays a major role in the provision of adult education with both day and evening courses. In the past the VEC has undertaken contract work for FAS in presenting programmes for disadvantaged and long-term unemployed women that included modules on personal effectiveness, incorporating counselling, guidance and advice components. A more recent intervention undertaken by the VEC is the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) that offers full-time educational provision to unemployed persons aged 21 and over. There are two groups of 20 persons each participating in VTOS. While there is scope for the provision of vocational counselling in the VTOS, actual formal provision is still very rare.

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*TEAGASC, the state agricultural and advice agency with responsibility for advice, training, agri-*business, and agri-tourism for farmers, provides advice and information to small-holders by visiting them on their farms, through locally based centres and through educational institutions. Problems of under-employment and difficulties of income generation among small-holders have been referred to in 3.2 above.

There are three Centres for the Unemployed in North Mayo: Ballina, Castlebar and Westport. These Centres are staffed by 20 participants on SES. The participants are provided with skilled work opportunities. They are trained to give social welfare advice. The Centres run literacy schemes for adults and leisure based courses for women who are out of the labour force. Emigrants' advice services are also offered at the Centres. Such activities are informally guidance oriented.

Finally, in North Mayo an Area Based Company, Meitheal Mhaigheo, with responsibility for initiating integrated programmes at local level containing elements of training, education and work experience aimed at re-integrating the long term unemployed into the labour force, has been established under the Programme for Economic and Social Progress agreed between the government and the social partners in 1991. As a first step in the process Meitheal Mhaigheo undertook an Initial Contact Programme to make direct contact with the long-term unemployed, to assess their needs and to identify areas for action. The next section examines the findings of the needs assessment survey in relation to the responses of the under 25 years of age category.

### 3.5 Needs Assessment Survey Results for Long-Term Unemployed Persons Aged under 25 Years

The purpose of the survey was to establish the skills, needs and requirements of unemployed people, and their views and opinions regarding their experience of unemployment, with a view to designing plans to improve services and programmes for unemployed in the area. The survey was conducted by interview with a random sample of the long-term unemployed. Twenty one per cent of the sample, 112 males and 42 females, were under the age of 25 years. The findings related in this section are based on a data extract.

The profile of the male interviewee is that of a person who is single (94%) and living at home with his parents (82%). The female interviewee tends to be single (79%) and much less likely (52%) to be living with parents. A high percentage of married respondents (33%) live with parents. Over 70% of the respondents described their economic circumstances as poor/very poor. In terms of educational level of attainment, just about half of the group had a Leaving Cert. qualification or higher. Eight per cent left school without qualifications - all of whom were male. A further 16 per cent left before the Inter Cert. and another 23 per cent left school after the Inter Cert. When compared with national trends (Section 1.3) the percentage of school-leavers without qualifications in North Mayo in this sample is estimated to be at least twice the national percentage, as is the cumulative total of all who have left by the end of Junior Cycle. It is worth noting that 7 per cent of males dropped out of the education system at the end of primary school, the majority of these living in towns.

When questioned about their willingness to return to full-time education, the majority replied negatively. Most of those had left school at the end of Junior Cycle and lived in rural areas. The reasons for the negative response were given as having no interest, having no aptitude, and preferring to have a job. Over two thirds of the group had never heard of VTOS (see 3.4). The main sources for hearing about VTOS were the Labour Exchange (45%) and newspapers (26%). Approximately 66% had previous experience of employment with a significantly larger proportion of females employed than males. Employment occupancy of one's last full-time job by economic sector showed marked gender differences similar to those pertaining at national level (Section 1.2 above) with males dominating agriculture, construction and manufacturing, and females overrepresented in commerce. Those who had completed an apprenticeship/training tended to be male, living outside of town, and possessing educational qualifications.

The majority of those who did not previously experience employment had left school by the end of Junior Cycle. There was an inverse relationship between level of educational attainment and experience of employment. The highest proportion of no employment experience occured among those who dropped out of the education system at the end of primary school. The average length of time the whole group reported as being presently unemployed was 22 months. Leaving school and not being able to find a job were given as the main circumstances leading to the present period of unemployment. Males expressed a strong preference for construction and commercial work while females mainly sought commercial work. Newspapers were the chief source of information (73%) for the whole group to find information about job vacancies, followed by FAS (8%).

Interviewees were, in general (61%), optimistic about their chances of finding employment in the next two years with 60% expressing a need for skills updating. The greatest obstacle to gaining employment was perceived as there being not enough jobs in the area (66%), lack of education (8%) and lack of skills (7%). Less than a quarter of the group had participated in a training course since becoming unemployed. When asked about emigration as an option at the present time, two thirds responded negatively with a significantly higher rejection ratio among females. The main reasons cited for rejection of the emigration option were no interest in going (31%), no work abroad (31%), and family(10%). Economic conditions here (37%) and a greater chance of obtaining a job abroad (29%) were the chief reasons cited for consideration of the emigration option. To a much lesser extent, the opportunity to travel and better working conditions were also motives cited for emigration. The UK was the most popular emigration destination (87%) followed by other EC (10%) and USA (3%). One quarter of the group had worked abroad previously. These tended to be males who possessed educational qualifications.

Finally, interviewees were asked how the service offered by the State agencies for employment and training could be altered to cater for the particular needs of unemployed people in general. The following suggestions were given and are presented in rank order:

1. More information.
2. More personal contact.
3. A wider variety of courses.
4. Move offices into local areas.
5. Higher allowances.
6. Better facilities.
7. More work experience.

These suggestions encompass interpersonal, intrapersonal and career development dimensions in the interaction between the agencies and those whom they serve. They concern issues of information and access.

### 3.6 Case Study 1: Summary

The general picture emerging from North Mayo is that of an area characterised by a high level of outward migration among young people with a high level of unemployment experienced by those young people who remain behind. Vocational counselling services provision in schools is limited by the large

number of small schools that exist in North Mayo. Outside of school there is very limited provision of guidance on education and training opportunities by state and community agencies. Vocational counselling is rarely provided. Geographical remoteness is an additional compounding factor in the delivery of such provision outside of school.

At least half of the long-term unemployed youth had left school by the end of Junior Cycle. Even if these had attended large size schools with guidance and counselling provision, it is unlikely that they would have benefitted from such provision as it tends to focus on the needs of Senior Cycle pupils. Unemployment experience to date was inversely related to level of educational attainment. Young males appeared to be a particularly vulnerable group in this respect. Deficiencies in educational attainment were a barrier to participation in certain training courses.

A significant majority of the long-term unemployed youth rejected the emigration option to seek employment. A return to full-time education as an option was also negatively perceived. Suggestions for improving the services of the State agencies for the long-term unemployed reflect the desire for a more client centred approach from the agencies.

## CASE STUDY 2: NORTH-WEST CONNEMARA

A comprehensive demographic and economic profile of North-West Connemara is presented in North-West Connemara: A Baseline Study of Poverty (Byrne, 1991) undertaken for FORUM, the North-West Connemara Rural Project, a model action project in the Third EC Poverty Programme.

### 3.7 Demography

The area of North-West Connemara is located on the western seaboard of Ireland and includes the island of Inishbofin. It is a mountainous region with lowland areas covered in blanket bog and with very little woodland. The majority of its 7,092 inhabitants (1991Census of Population) live in rural areas. The two largest concentrations of population are to be found in the towns of Clifden (808 persons) and Roundstone (281 persons). Since 1986 the population of the area has remained fairly static. However, when one examines the age structure of the population, the lowest percentage share of the

population (15.2%) is recorded equally for the 15-24 years and the 65 years and over age categories. The low total population share of the 15-24 age group reflects migration and emigration from the area.

### 3.8 Local Economic Context

A large part of the labour force is dependent on agriculture, using poor, wet, boggy land, most of which is mountain. Almost three quarters of those involved in farming are working farms of 12 hectares or less. Fishing is carried out on a small scale with a short season from May to September. A number of fish farms have been established along the coast in recent years. There are two factories based in Clifden and a number of small-scale industries in Roundstone. While the infrastructure is poor, North-West Connemara is a popular tourist area and the spin off creates seasonal employment.

### 3.9 The Labour Force

There is no exact breakdown of the size and composition of the labour force in the FORUM report. Using population census statistics (1991), there were 3,900 persons aged between 15 and 65 years in the North-West Connemara area. Self-employment is the status of most persons involved in farming. In August 1993 registered unemployment stood at 1,182. This represents an unemployment rate of 30% and is probably a conservative estimate given that it is compared with a figure that includes some school pupils, some who retired at age 60, and housewives. As has been noted in Section 3.3 above, registered unemployment figures do not take into account the level of underemployment in agriculture and the impact of outward migration, particularly among the young people. In 1987 the area was estimated to be losing 68% of its young people.

### 3.10 Provision of Vocational Counselling Services

There are two post-primary schools in the area, one with a guidance counsellor working in that role on a half-time basis, the other too small to appoint a guidance counsellor. According to O'Donohue (1992), there is a high drop out rate from second level education and a very low participation rate in third level education compared to regional and national averages. The Community School in Clifden provides two vocational training (VPT) courses for persons who have attained a Leaving Cert. level of education.

Most of the State funded intervention for young people outside of school has been channeled through Connemara West, a community owned and managed development organisation. Based in Letterfrack, Connemara West has been instrumental in the setting up of training programmes for young people and in creating full-time and part-time employment through projects and activities. It supports the following education and training initiatives:

* Furniture Making and Design - a two year national certificate in technology course for young people with a Leaving Cert. standard of education, in partnership with the Regional Technical College, Galway,

* A Youthreach Programme - a two year course in basic vocational skills for early/unqualified school-leavers, operated by FAS and the VEC,

* Youth Options - an eight month course providing a broad range of training and skills to school-leavers who have a Leaving Cert. standard of education, funded by FAS.

While no formal vocational counselling is provided, preparation for work and social and health skills are covered in Youthreach and Youth Options. Vocational skills sampling is part of both courses.

### 3.11 Survey of Youth in North-West Connemara

This survey was undertaken in 1993 by Lisa McAllister, a post-graduate student in Rural Development at University College, Dublin. She examined the perceptions and opinions of young people on training, employment and their social situation, and their present and future prospects in the area. The survey was conducted by interview with a random sample of young people sub-divided into four categories of 20 persons each: full-time employed, unemployed, participants in FAS training, and persons home on holidays who are attending a third level education course outside of the area. Altogether 80 young people were interviewed, 49 male and 31 female, aged between 15 and 25 years.

Ninety four per cent of the sample lived at home with their parents in families of an average size of 7 with a range of 3 to 13 persons. Fifty seven per cent of the sample were unemployed (this percentage included persons attending training or a third level education course). Three quarters of the unemployed were male. The average age of the unemployed group was 18 years with 37% of the unemployed under 18 years. McAllister noted a trend whereby young people stay in the area for a

few years after leaving school and emigrate to the UK or USA when there are no employment or training opportunities open to them. Seventy two per cent of the unemployed group left school before completing the Leaving Cert., and 35% of those had no educational qualifications. About half of this group had been unemployed for over one year and 20% had never been employed. For those who had experienced employment, the work they undertook was mainly semi and unskilled seasonal jobs in tourism. Sixty one per cent had another family member receiving social welfare, and 20% had more than one family member in receipt of this allowance.

The majority of the employed (60%) were female, probably due to opportunities in the hotel and tourism sector ( the survey was undertaken during the tourist season). The average age of the employed group was 20 years and all were over the age of 18 years. Seventy four per cent of this group had the Leaving Cert. The type of employment engaged in was mainly (73%) semi and unskilled work. This suggests that, even for such work, level of educational attainment was a significant factor in recruitment practice. None of the group was employed in professional work. Young people from the area who obtain professional qualifications do not find corresponding work in the area. Thirty five per cent of the employed had one family member in receipt of social welfare.

In terms of their experience of training, 55% of the sample had completed or were completing a training course. Nineteen per cent had no formal training while the remainder were attending a third level college. Most had undertaken FAS training courses including Youthreach and Youth Options. Fifty seven per cent reported that their motivation in undergoing training was to improve their skills and experience. The remainder reported that they had left school, were unemployed, and it was the only course on offer in the area. Fifty per cent stated that training had improved their job prospects. One third felt that such was not the case because there were no job opportunities in the area for the training they got or there was a high level competition for few jobs or their training was incomplete. Training was perceived as beneficial if it led to jobs and not beneficial if it was used just to pass the time.

A large majority considered their area to be disadvantaged all year round. Sixty five per cent felt that as a result they would be migrating on a temporary basis while 18% felt they would have to migrate on a permanent basis . The remainder said that they would not move from the area.

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With respect to future employment ambitions, among those employed (mainly in semi and unskilled work), 54% aspired to skilled work, 23% to professional work, and 23% to semi and unskilled work. This suggests a high level of underemployment among the employed. The ambitions among the unemployed were 74% for skilled work, 12% for semi and unskilled work and 6% for professional work. Learning a particular skill is seen as a route out of unemployment. When all interviewees were asked where and what did they see themselves doing in 8-10 years time, a different and perhaps more realistic picture emerges.

Table 3.1 Perceptions on Type and Location of Work in 8-10 Years Time of Youth in North-West Connemara

| Work Type | % | Location | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | % Home | % Abroad |
| Skilled | 40 | 23 | 17 |
| Professional | 28 | 13 | 15 |
| Semi/ Unskilled | 20 | 5 | 15 |
| Don't Know | 12 | | |

Source: McAllister,1993

Forty seven per cent of the sample felt that their future employment would be located abroad. Almost half of this group hoped to come back to work or retire in the area eventually. Forty one per cent felt that they would be at work in the area in 8-10 years but most of this group reckoned that they would spend some of that time working abroad. When asked about their preference for location of employment, the following rank order emerged:

1. The Galway Region
2. Their Home Area
3. Abroad
4. Elsewhere in Ireland

Their suggestions for the development of training programmes include that training should:

- match the needs of the area
- match new opportunities in the area
- be a preparation for work outside the area
- lead to participation in more advanced training
- be an alternative for those who could not afford to study at third level

The majority of their leisure activities were pub centred. Only one in seven was a member of a community organisation, mainly sport. Their awareness of clubs and groups in the area was quite low. The alternatives they suggested to pub centred activities included team sports, community development and social work, activity clubs e.g. set dance, and creative arts clubs.

### 3.12 Case Study 2: Summary

High rates of outward migration, early school-leaving, unemployment and underemployment characterise the situation of young people in North-West Connemara. Connemara West and FORUM have done good work in community development in the area with assistance from FAS, VEC and Galway Regional Technical College but the scale of the problem confronting these groups and agencies - given the infracture and size of the youth population - is very large. This is recognised by the young people themselves as is evident from their responses concerning their future work destinations. Formal provision of vocational counselling services in schools is very limited; outside of school it is virtually non-existent. Indeed within school the rate of early school leaving presents its own challenge to vocational counselling provision. Lack of employment opportunities seems to affect males more than females, and as in the first case study, there is an inverse relationship between level of educational attainment and employment prospects. In North-West Connemara, however, this applies even to semi/unskilled work, mostly of a seasonal nature.

# Chapter 4

## ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study examined the macro context in which young Irish people make decisions about education, training and employment. At the micro level the study assessed the context in which young rural disadvantaged make such decisions. The following analysis will address these contexts seperately.

### 4.1 Macro Context: Young Irish People

The typical young Irish person:

* stays on at school until age 18
* attains Leaving Certificate level of education
* pursues further education and training or obtains employment
* seeks employment in Ireland
* considers migration for employment.

The motivation for such behaviour comes from different sources:

* parental/family/peers
* existing labour market requirements in Ireland for a skilled workforce
* lack of employment opportunities locally and in Ireland
* media messages on the positive correlation between level of educational attainment and employment, both in Ireland and abroad.

Vocational counselling services in second level schools and in further education/training support those labour market transition behaviours. While there is marked gender differentiation in occupancy of employment in economic sectors, there is evidence that the degree of differentiation is becoming less marked among the present generation of young people. Mobility/migration is an issue for many school-leavers. The evidence suggests that migration behaviour is a career option for the better qualified and is an involuntary behaviour for the less qualified. More males than females actually emigrate. English speaking countries appear to be the main migration destinations. However in recent years the proportion of migrants opting for EC countries other than the UK has increased significantly, particularly among the better qualified. EC language competency deficiency limits somewhat the range

of possible migration destinations.

A major consequence of current government regulations on the appointment of guidance counsellors to second level schools is that, where such services are provided, they tend to focus on those immediately identifiable as school-leavers i.e. senior cycle Leaving Certificate pupils. The less qualified and the early school-leaver, less identifiable as a group, are less likely to receive or benefit from programmed guidance interventions. This includes preparation for emigration. Programmed guidance activities for senior cycle pupils include preparation for emigration. Traditionally such preparation has focused on English speaking countries as destinations but more recently the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants has produced quality video material and software for EC countries other than the UK for use in second level schools and youth information centres. The materials were based on the experiences of the IECE with young Irish emigrants in those countries. The Institute of Guidance Counsellors has just published a handbook for guidance counsellors entitled "Higher Education, Training, and Work in Europe" with PETRA support (Oct., 1993). This is also intended for use in schools and in informal guidance settings e.g. youth information centres.

Outside of school FAS, the National Training and Employment Authority, gives some emigration advice to job seekers who wish to avail of EURES. Euro-Advisers are being placed in FAS's main employment offices. FAS has placed some of its staff in the employment services in Germany, Netherlands, and the UK. To date FAS has produced printed material on working in some EC countries. Preparation for emigration is also touched upon in school and non-school based training courses.

Where there are well established patterns of migration in families and in localities, particularly in rural areas, informal networks of family and friends have a major influence on migration destination and employment opportunities. This is irrespective of educational level attained or level of language competency or alternative information available. Other informal guidance sources e.g. Unemployment Resource Centres, Youth Information Centres, Emigrant Advice Centres, provide emigration information. Groups such as the London based Action Group for Irish Youth play an invaluable role in in producing guidance materials based on the actual experiences of young Irish emigrants in the UK.

Given the peripheral location of Ireland, its bourgeoning youth population, the limited opportunities for training and employment, its tradition of emigration, and a high youth unemployment rate , it is not surprising that (i) unemployment rests as a major concern and source of worry to its young people, (ii) migration for employment is perceived as one solution (though not the preferred solution for most), (iii) preparation for migration has been part of guidance programmes in education and training, particularly for the past decade, (iv) voluntary groups and agencies have been to the fore in providing emigration advice, and (v) the government is now funding the placing of FAS staff in employment services in some Member States. Vocational counselling with a European dimension already exists for many young Irish people, albeit in a limited form. Apart from the recent publication by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors there has been little systematic development of vocational information materials on other Member States. Such materials are best based on actual experiences of young Irish people in other Member States, as evidenced by the work of the AGIY in the UK. A very useful source of information of this nature is the experiences of young Irish people who participated in PETRA Action 1.

## 4.2 Micro Context: Young Irish People - Rural Disadvantaged

The young rural disadvantaged person is likely to be:

* an early school-leaver
* unqualified
* male
* single
* living with his parents
* unemployed
* in receipt of social welfare and have another family member in receipt of same.

This person is unlikely to have received vocational counselling in school and even less likely to have received such counselling outside of school. He has probably some ambition to become a skilled worker and sees this as a route out of employment. However this is unlikely to be achieved because of his lack of educational qualifications and of training centres in the area. He will stay around the area he lives in for a number of years, while on receipt of social welfare, in the hope that business will pick up and that he can get some seasonal unskilled work. After a number of years he realises that there is no future for him and decides to emigrate. His emigration destination is most likely to be the UK and the destination within the UK will be decided by where his peers/family members have gone. Alternatively, he will go on his own, badly prepared, end up on social welfare, and return home in a short space of time.

### 4.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

There are several approaches to improving the employment prospects at home and abroad of rural disadvantaged youth. Firstly, support services need to be in place within school to keep them in school longer and to enable them to achieve minimum levels of qualification. This necessitates a change in the regulations concerning the appointment of guidance counsellors and remedial teachers to all schools, and in particular to schools with less than 350 pupils. This primary preventive approach is more cost effective than remediation of the problems associated with long-term unemployment. Secondly, a change of attitude towards education among the parents of possible early school-leavers needs to take place. In rural areas use must be made of the local media e.g. local radio, newspapers, parish newsletters, and of local networks e.g. voluntary associations/groups. In the context of vocational counselling, it makes sense to appoint a guidance counsellor to work in a target area of rural disadvantage with a brief to use the local media and networks in an stimulus educational role. Individual vocational counselling could be catered for through travelling around the area. (The Community Welfare Officer provides welfare information in rural areas in this manner.) Thirdly, vocational training in such areas needs to be developed corresponding , though not exclusively so, with local employment possibilities, especially tourism. This would involve the development of existing structures for vocational training e.g. VEC, Connemara West, Community Schools. Fourthly, guidance should be considered an integral part of vocational training. Quality guidance is essential. Fifthly, there needs to be a policy of positive discrimination by local employers in recruitment practice in favour of the early school-leavers for semi/unskilled work. Sixthly, in order to introduce a European mobility dimension to available vocational training, use should be made of programmes such as PETRA to establish a bridgehead between disadvantaged rural areas and training and employment opportunities in other Member States. Guidance materials with a European dimension should be developed for the rural disadvantaged but should follow as closely as possible the actual mobility experience of those who have made such a transition. The possibility of a community to community link up whereby enterprises in urban Europe would use the scenic beauty and facilities of these disadvantaged rural areas in Ireland and in return offer training and employment opportunities to the rural disadvantaged should be investigated.

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CEDEFOP Annex

## Target groups analysed in the twelve Member States

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| B | 1) | Young people in Charleroi and Wallonian Brabant |
| | 2) | Young people in Brussels |
| DK | 1) | Locked-in, unemployed young people |
| | 2) | Young people dropping out or changing course in the education system |
| D | | Girls and young women when choosing an occupation |
| GR | 1) | Young people who leave school without completing compulsory education |
| | 2) | Young women with no skills training |
| E | 1) | Young women in the autonomous community of Madrid whose chief activity is domestic work in their own homes |
| | 2) | Young people of both sexes affected by industrial reconversion on the left bank of the Bilbao estuary |
| F | 1) | Young people in initial training |
| | 2) | Young job seekers |
| IRL | | Rural disadvantaged youth<br>Case study 1: North Mayo<br>Case study 2: North-West Connemara |
| I | | Low skilled young people |
| L | 1) | Young people in the 9th class of upper secondary technical education |
| | 2) | Young people with supplementary education in the last year of compulsory schooling |
| NL | | Young drifters |
| P | 1) | Young people in their 9th school year |
| | 2) | Young people who have completed their 9th school year and are attending vocational training schools |
| | 3) | Young people with or without school leaving certificate attending alternative training courses |
| UK | 1) | Young people in full-time employment |
| | 2) | Homeless young people |

CEDEFOP - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

**Determining the need for vocational counselling among different target groups of young people under 28 years of age in Ireland**
**Case studies: rural disadvantaged youth**
John McCarthy
PETRA NCU NATIONAL VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE CENTRE
LÉARGAS - The Exchange Bureau, Dublin

CEDEFOP panorama

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Following a brief overview of the career guidance systems in their countries, the authors of the reports describe a number of target groups of young people under 28 years of age, their economic, social and cultural backgrounds and the problems posed by the transition from school to working life.

A total of 21 target groups from the whole spectrum are examined, ranging from young people with favourable conditions for transition to the most disadvantaged.

A comparison is made between the need for career guidance, the demand coming from these groups and the current offer. The conclusions drawn in the summary report (deficit analyses) provide indications for designing future action programmes at EU level.

Particular attention is paid to mobility and the readiness of young people in this age group (PETRA II) throughout the EU Member States.

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**National report**